

House Republican Press Release

September 22, 2005
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Witkos Supports Efforts To Change Eminent Domain Laws



HARTFORD- State Representative Kevin Witkos (R-Canton) signed a petition this week calling for the House of Representatives to convene in special session, and take up the issue of eminent domain.

The petition, initiated by House Minority Leader Robert M. Ward (R-North Branford) has the dual purpose of instituting a moratorium against the seizure of private property by government entities for use in commercial and economic development purposes, and instituting fundamental changes in Connecticut's private property rights.

Last June the U.S. Supreme Court voted 5-4 to authorize the City of New London to seize private residences by eminent domain to allow the city to begin development of a hotel and conference center.

"The thought of state law permitting the kind of action taken by New London, where private residences are taken from homeowners to attempt to enrich the city is disgraceful," said Representative Witkos. "There is no question that the legislature needs to act immediately to protect the interests of all those who own property in this state."

House Republican legislators gathered Friday in front of the Hall of the House to call for the special session. They were joined by Susette Kelo, a defendant in the Supreme Court case who will lose her home if the law is not changed.

Representative Witkos recently appeared on Channel 30 with Tom Monahan to argue for a special session against House Majority Leader Chris Donovan.

The petition needs to be signed by a majority of legislators; 76 House members and 19 Senate members, before a special session would result.